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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Method in History for Teachers and Students. By WILLIAM H. MACE, Professor of History in Syracuse University. (Boston and London: Ginn and Co. 1897. Pp. xvii, 311.)

THIS small volume is chiefly concerned with the problem of interpreting American history to students in the secondary and primary schools. It is not a book of devices. The term "Method," says the author, "is not even intended to suggest diagrams, chronological charts, or expedients of like nature. But something far more fundamental has been the aim: the determining factors in method. . . . Whether diagrams, outlines, maps, and so on are to be used in teaching history cannot be decided by the whim of the teacher." The appeal must be made to principles. In other words Professor Mace has set himself the task of getting at the philosophy of method, so far at least as it can have a direct bearing upon the teaching of history, and of American history in particular. The book is divided into three parts: 1. The General Nature of History (pp. 1-76); 2. Organization of the Periods of American History (pp. 77-254); 3. The Elementary Phases of History Teaching (pp. 255-308).

History, according to Professor Mace, is a study of two sets of facts: a people's acts and a people's thoughts and feelings. Acts are the superficial evidence of ideas; they are the outer form of the subject-matter, while the ideas constitute the content or essence of history. As history is the study of the continuous growth or evolution of man in society through more or less marked changes in ideas, it is possible to distinguish five well-marked phases in the history of a people, a political, a religious, an educational, an industrial, and a social phase. These phases are distinguished by five organizations or "institutions:" the government, the church, the school, occupation, and the family. Speaking figuratively, Professor Mace conceives the life of a people as a "mighty stream of five currents." Thus having reduced the subject to such limits Professor Mace would value an event in history in proportion as it expresses the growth of "institutional" life. "That event or period has the highest historical value which reveals most fully the people's institutional thought and feeling" (p. 67). De Soto's expedition should be studied in a course in American history, for it had a "more intimate connection with our institutions" than the work of most Spanish explorers. One would attend to the work of George Rogers Clark or to that of Daniel Boone in proportion to its contributions to the growth of

American institutions. Inasmuch as Indian institutions did not "flow into or become a part of American institutions," Indian history may be called "non-American" history (p. 81).

Professor Mace's analysis of American history is guided by his peculiar theory of "institutions." For pedagogical purposes he casts to one side the discoveries and explorations—these belong to American history only in so far as they tended to fix the locations of "institutions." Between 1607 and 1870 he finds three periods, every one of which is marked by a dominant movement in institutional growth. Previous to 1760 the prevailing ideas of the colonists tend to the rise and growth of local institutions—the five great institutions. The New England men seek a general diffusion of rights and privileges. The Southern men on the other hand are for centralization of rights. The middle colonists are guided by no one dominant idea, but yield to the force that comes from a blending of the two somewhat distinct tendencies found in New England and in the South. From 1760 to 1789 the dominant idea is that of union: before 1783 it is union against England, and after that date it has developed distinctly into union on domestic questions. The idea of nationality which was at work before 1789 has constituted since that time a new era in institutional evolution. In analyzing the incidents and ideas of this third period (1789–1870) Professor Mace is at his best. He writes rather as a historian than as a pedagogue, and has not much occasion to force his "institutional" theory into the foreground.

If the history of institutions is to have relatively a distinct place as one phase of the study of history, then Professor Mace's theory is misleading. He has based his volume upon such terms as "institution" and "institutional ideas," terms which he has nowhere defined. To these terms he has reduced everything of consequence in American history by the application of one test. The structures of society are numerous. At the basis of civilization is the family: without it there would be no such thing as the church or the state, a system of industry or a system of education. It is thus of fundamental importance to the historian without being of first importance. Mr. Spencer has given much attention to the family. Professor McMaster, Mr. Bryce and Mr. Lecky have comparatively little to say about it. The structures with which the historian of institutions may concern himself are the systems or numerous organizations in the state which give to any country its organic unity and serve by their continuous existence to bind the past to the present. Behind these structures is the people's life, full of emotions, ideas, actions, to which no single test can ever be applied by historian, philosopher, or scientist. If there is any clear law in history it is that of incessant motion. Discrimination in the use of terms is lacking in Professor Mace's book. As a consequence his doctrine is vague and misleading. The true safe-guard for the teacher who reads the volume is his or her own interest in things simply because they were.

HENRY BARRETT LEARNED.